What is claimed is:

1. A print inspection apparatus, comprising:

an image sharpness conversion element for converting an image sharpness of

5   inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on print image data and that of

reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison with

said inspection object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels

constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the

basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; and

10   a comparison element for comparing said inspection object data and said

reference data with each other after converting their respective image sharpnesses, to

perform an inspection for printing.

2. A method of performing an inspection for printing, comprising the steps of:

15   (a) converting an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in

a processing on print image data and that of reference data which represents an image

condition as a reference for comparison with said inspection object data by performing an

average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels

constituting said reference data on the basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively;

20   and

(b) comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other

after converting their respective image sharpnesses, to perform an inspection for printing.

3. A printing system which generates print image data and performs at least one

25   of plate making and output on the basis of said print image data, comprising:

(a) a print inspection apparatus for performing an inspection of said print image data, which comprises

(a-1) an image sharpness conversion element for converting an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on said print image data and that of reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison with said inspection object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; and

(a-2) a comparison element for comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other after converting their respective image sharpnesses, to perform an inspection for printing.

4. The printing system according to claim 3, further comprising:

(b) an image reader capable of reading at least one of images for a printing plate, a plate-making film and a printed matter,

wherein image data acquired by said image reader becomes at least one of said inspection object data and said reference data.

5. A program which is executed by a computer to cause said computer to function as a print inspection apparatus comprising:

an image sharpness conversion element for converting an image sharpness of inspection object data which is acquired in a processing on print image data and that of reference data which represents an image condition as a reference for comparison with said inspection object data by performing an average-masking operation on pixels constituting said inspection object data and pixels constituting said reference data on the

basis of a predetermined mask size, respectively; and

a comparison element for comparing said inspection object data and said reference data with each other after converting their respective image sharpnesses, to perform an inspection for printing.

5